

Appln. No. 10/693,533
Amendment
Reply to Office Action dated October 25, 2004

Docket No. 304-816

REMARKS

The foregoing amendments and these remarks are in response to the Office Action dated October 25, 2004. This amendment is filed with a request for extension of time and authorization to charge Deposit Account No. 50-0951 for the appropriate fees.

At the time of the Office Action, claims 1-20 were pending. In the Office Action, claims 1-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a). The rejections are discussed in more detail below.

I. Rejections to the claims based upon Art

Claims 1, 6-11, 13, 14, 17 and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,013,893 to Goessler et al. ("Goessler") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,750,959 to Plumptre ("Plumptre"). Claims 2, 4 and 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Goessler in view of Plumptre as applied to claims 1, 6-11, 13, 14, 17 and 18, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,162,636 to Randolph Jr. et al. ("Randolph"). Claim 3 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Goessler in view of Plumptre and Randolph as applied to claims 2, 4 and 5, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,327,280 to McWilliams ("McWilliams"). Claims 12, 19 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Goessler in view of Plumptre as applied to claims 1, 6-11, 13, 14, 17 and 18, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,121,204 to Welch et al. ("Welch"). Claims 15 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Goessler in view of Plumptre as applied to claims 1, 6-11, 13, 14, 17 and 18, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,809,680 to Scheidler et al. ("Scheidler").

Prior to discussing the rejections, a brief review of the features of amended claim 1 is believed appropriate. Claim 1 includes, *inter alia*, that the illuminating devices are constructed as separate segments of a geometrical basic shape, which is defined in the specification as being for example a circle, rectangle or square. For each display device there are two basic shapes of the same nature, but of different sizes and which are concentrically arranged. Additionally, the display device is constructed separately from the heating device. Notably also, claim 1 relates to a display device and not to an illuminating means for a hotplate.

The prior art of Goessler discloses illuminated displays 20 with a light source 21, which

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only represent light sources in the form of a point. The illuminated displays cannot be seen as separate segments as recited in claim 1. During operation of the Goessler display, light from the light source 21 is directed into the light guide 30 which surrounds the heating device. The light guide 30 thus shows the position of the outer heating field part 13 of the heating field 12. An inner light guide 20 marks the position of a central heating field part 14. These display devices are not separate from the heating device, but are integral with it. Furthermore, Goessler does not teach or suggest a concentric arrangement in the display device, but rather has two heating/illuminating devices.

The prior art in form of Plumptre essentially discloses an electric heater which is quite similar to the one disclosed by Goessler. Also in this case the display device is constructed in one piece with the heating device and not separately.

The same applies to Randolph. Although the lamp 29 of figures 2 and 3 is located outside the area of the hotplates 14, light is guided through the hard glass mounting plate 12 in a marginal area 33 surrounding the hotplates 14. In this marginal area 33 the mask 35 and the coating 34 (see figure 4) define an illuminated ring around the hotplates 14. This clearly shows that also the prior art of Randolph does not disclose a display device that is constructed separately from the heating device and located at a certain distance.

The prior art in form of McWilliams discloses a form of a heating device in figure 1 with one round heater coil 10 and another coil 12 located at its side. This does not give any hint to a person skilled in the art to construct a display device according to the features of claims 2 and 3.

The prior art in form of Welch discloses in figure 5 a circular bar graph display for displaying different power levels of the electric range of figure 1. This display device does not show any concentric arrangement according to claim 1.

The prior art of Scheidler does not disclose a display device having a concentric arrangement of illuminated segments. Furthermore, the mask 7 with the indication of the condition "HOT" does not optically display a heating operation or an activation of any individual heating area. It only is a warning sign for any user that on some undefined place of the cooking apparatuses there is a hot area.

For the foregoing reasons, the features recited in amended claim 1 are not taught or
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suggested in any of the prior art devices, either singly or in combination, and claim 1 is believed to be patentable. As the dependent claims are all dependent upon an allowable base claim, they are also all believed to be patentable.

II. Conclusion

Applicants have made every effort to present claims which distinguish over the prior art, and it is thus believed that all claims are in condition for allowance. Nevertheless, Applicants invite the Examiner to call the undersigned if it is believed that a telephonic interview would expedite the prosecution of the application to an allowance. In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and prompt allowance of the pending claims.

Respectfully submitted,

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